

Sergeant Aburamen was followed to his car by a jeering mob singing the Japanese National anthem. This episode, while unfortunate, had a marked effect upon the better element of the evacuees who openly confessed their condemnation of such deplorable conduct. Other members of the Military staff were subjected to taunts and insults while traveling about the Center, in both Japanese and American, during this period.

- February 11 -- Major General Futhill visited the Center for a brief period; addressed Kibel group at Recreation Hall No. 54.
- February 12 -- Col. W. F. Scobey and Lt. J. D. Hughes visited the Center and Colonel Scobey met for discussion with some of the leading evacuees in Mr. Bennett's office. He also visited the camouflage net factory and discussed registration with many of the former ex-service men among the evacuees employed there. His visit and talks had an excellent effect; this was reflected almost immediately in the trend of the loyalty issue in the questionnaire.
- February 13 -- Registration of Japanese Americans suspended.
- February 14 -- Registration of Japanese Americans suspended.
- February 15 -- Registration of Japanese Americans resumed and volunteers accepted. Conferred with NRA staff on problem of removing pro-Japanese agitators.
- February 16 -- See attached letter.
- February 17 -- Butte Community residents recalled for reinterview on negative answers to loyalty question.
- February 18 -- Registration continued without disturbance.
- February 19 -- Registration continued without disturbance.
- February 20 -- Registration continued without disturbance.
- February 21 -- Registration continued without disturbance.
- February 22 -- Canal Community residents who registered February 10, 11, and 12 and indicated a negative loyalty reaction were recalled for reinterview; registration of issei of military age completed.
- February 23 -- Sergeant Gillotti transferred to Butte Community to aid in registration.
- February 24 -- Registration of hospitalized males of military age completed.

- February 25 -- Registration activities continued. Lt. Roberta House (WAAG Officer) addressed two groups of selected representatives at Canal Community, Mess Halls, Nos. 23 and 6.
- February 26 -- Registration of women citizens, ages 17-37, inclusive, commenced at Butte Community. Lt. Roberta House addressed two groups of selected representatives at Butte Community, Mess Halls Nos. 31 and 59.
- February 27 -- Registration continued without disturbance; Military Mission office moved from Administration Building to Employment Division building.
- February 28 -- Registration continued without disturbance.
- March 1 -- Primary schools in Butte and Canal Communities closed for one week beginning this date to make use of school staffs and facilities for registration purposes; registration of women citizens, 17-37, inclusive, commenced in Butte Community, Lieutenant House and Lieutenant Holman appeared at two meetings of Butte women residents at Mess Halls Nos. 48 and 57.
- March 2 -- Lieutenant Holman remained on duty for consultation purposes; aided at Butte registration of women in the morning and Canal in the afternoon. Registration of male citizens and aliens over military age commenced in Canal Community. Lieutenant Holman addressed 300 women in Canal Community in Mess Hall No. 13 at 7:30 P.M.
- March 3 -- Registration continued.
- March 4 -- Registration continued.
- March 5 -- Registration of male citizens and aliens over military age commenced in Butte Community.
- March 6 -- Registration continued. Senator Chandler and Mr. George W. Malone held public hearing at Phoenix; visited Center with Colonel Scobey.
- March 7 -- Sunday.
- March 8 -- Col. W. F. Scobey and Mr. George Malone visited Center and interviewed cross section of registrants; registration continued.
- March 9 -- Registration continued; addressed group at Army Smoker held at Mess Hall No. 41. Other speakers: Capt. F. E. Patterson, 319th MP Company, and Bill Kajikawa, State Teachers College, Tempe, Arizona; results were good.

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- March 10 -- Registration continued.
- March 11 -- Registration continued.
- March 12 -- Registration continued; secured volunteer enlistment  
JACL President, Nobu Kawai.
- March 13 -- Registration continued.
- March 14 -- Sunday. Sergeant Gillotti granted 3-day pass; Technical  
Sergeant, Fourth Grade, Aburamen granted same pass.
- March 15 -- Registration completed; Corporal Welling returned to 319th  
M.P.E.G. Company. Final summary of registration attached.

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Norman R. Thompson  
Captain, C.M.P.  
Commanding.

WAR DEPARTMENT  
ARMY SERVICE FORCES  
OFFICE OF THE PROVOST MARSHAL GENERAL  
WASHINGTON

March 17, 1943

MEMORANDUM FOR: Office of the Assistant Secretary of War  
Room 4B-826  
Pentagon Building,  
Washington, D.C.

Attention: Captain John M. Hall

SUBJECT: Impressions of Selective Service Registration at  
Gila River, Arizona (February 6, 1943 - March  
17, 1943.)

1. LOCATION. Gila River Relocation Center is situated in the middle of the Pima Indian Reservation, which consists of 17,000 acres of desert country 45 miles from Phoenix, Arizona. The nearest town to the Center is Casa Grande, with a population of 800, seventeen miles southwest. The Relocation Center is divided into two communities, approximately three miles apart. Butte Community is twice as large as Canal Community, and contains the main administrative office, hospital and camouflage plant. An irrigation canal has been brought into the project and there are 700 acres under cultivation at the present time, which produce the year around. In addition there are other large areas cleared and irrigated upon which alfalfa is grown for grazing purposes. Several thousand head of stock have recently been acquired and 100 farrow sows. A large percentage of the evacuees were farmers and are truly expert in raising truck garden crops. Many women are employed as farm labor. The camouflage factory at Butte Community at the present time is producing a million feet of camouflage per day. At Canal Community there is a plant nursery in operation. It is very well managed. There is also another activity about to start there, which will produce model planes and naval ships. It is reliably estimated that the Gila River Project will be at least 80% self-supporting by July, 1943. One glaring lack of efficiency is that the foodstuffs produced at this Center must be consumed by the inmates of this or other Centers, and the many Army cantonments in the immediate vicinity are unable to purchase any of it.

There is an excellent hospital and dental clinic, as well as a complete school system from kindergarten through Senior High School.

2. POPULATION. The total population of both communities is approximately 13,500 men, women and children. There are 2,488 male citizens of military age. Originally 60%, or 1500, of this group signified

their loyalty to the United States of America by answering "Yes" to questions No. 27 and 28 on the questionnaire. Before the close of the registration period "change-overs" had increased this to 1950, or 78%. There are 2423 female citizens. 2141, or 88%, of them signified their loyalty by answering questions 27 and 28 in the affirmative. Furthermore, 2090 signified their willingness to join the WAAC or Army Nurse Corps if the opportunity presented itself. The Center also contains 100 male citizens over military age of 38, 89 of whom proved loyal. There are in addition 2906 male aliens, and all but one registered as being sympathetic to this country's cause and swore to do nothing to frustrate its war effort. The 1317 female aliens at Gila River registered 100% sympathetic. 100 men of military age volunteered for the Nisei Combat Unit.

3. WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY STAFF. The project is very ably directed by Mr. Leroy Bennett, who is exceptionally well qualified for the job at hand, and whose complete cooperation with the military mission made the results obtained possible. Mr. Bennett's staff, consisting of Mr. Brown, Assistant Director; Mr. Rodgers, Agricultural Director; Mr. Norris, Transportation Director; Mr. Sawyer, Educational Director; Mr. Huse and Mr. Landward, administration Assistants; and Mr. Keadle, Chief Stewart, were all most cooperative. Also present were Mr. Williamson, Internal Security Director; and Mr. Terry, Legal Director.

4. MILITARY STAFF. The military staff consisted of Captain Norman R. Thompson, C.M.P. Washington D.C.; staff sergeant John Conley, III, Sergeant-Investigator, MIS, Seventh Service Command, Omaha, Nebraska; Sergeant John Gillotti, Sergeant-Investigator, MIS, Seventh Service Command, Omaha, Nebraska; Technical Sergeant 4th Grade Edward H. Aburaman, Interpreters School, Camp Savage, Minnesota (Japanese-American); and Corporal Kenneth L. Welling, 319th M.P.E.G.Co., Rivers, Arizona. Corporal Welling was temporarily assigned, following the hospitalization of Staff Sergeant Conley on February 8, 1943. This group, with the exception of Corporal Welling, was trained in the Office of The Provost Marshal General, Washington, D.C., for a period of 10 days prior to their departure on February 2, 1943, for Gila River.

5. ORIENTATION PERIOD. Orientation of the project started on the day of our arrival, February 6, 1943, and continued through the 7th, 8th and 9th, which consisted of a thorough inspection of the project, meeting and presenting the proposed mission to the War Relocation Authority Staff, and also meeting the leading Japanese-American evacuees of the project. At the same time a clerical group of 30 interviewers, clerks and stenographers were instructed in the duties they would perform in the registration. Beginning on February 7th meetings were held throughout the day and evening in both communities. Aside from one outdoor mass-meeting, which was held in Canal Community, all these meetings were conducted in either mess-halls or churches before groups numbering not more than 300 people. The speakers at these meetings were Mr. Leroy Bennett, Project Director, and Captain Norman R. Thompson. The Reverend Dr. Tajima served as interpreter. At these meetings the letter from the War Department was read, as was the letter of the President to the Honorable The Secretary of War. At every meeting questions from the floor were entertained and

answered, the procedure being that the questions had to be submitted in writing. The tenor usually indicated the mental reaction of the group being addressed. All told, some 34 meetings were held and addressed by Captain Thompson and all but two by Mr. Bennett. One meeting was conducted by Technical Sergeant Aburaman in Japanese. This meeting was held at the request of a group of Issei and apparently was an organized conspiracy on the part of a group of Kibei because shortly after the meeting started organized heckling began, which wound up in a hostile demonstration in which Sergeant Aburaman was abused and reviled, both in English and in Japanese, and threatened with all manner of physical violence, and the meeting finally broke up with the audience singing the Japanese National Anthem. Sergeant Aburaman's conduct during this rather trying ordeal was exemplary. The immediate reaction to this demonstration unquestionably did more good than harm because of the better element in both communities expressed their indignation and disapproval of the night's proceedings.

6. REGISTRATION. Actual registration began February 10, 1943, in both Butte and Canal Communities, and no difficulty was experienced in getting the evacuees to register. The loyalty results, however, were very disappointing and only one volunteer was secured during the first days' registration. The percentage of disloyalty of the first days' registration was approximately 57%. On the 11th and 12th registration continued but the disloyalty quotient rose rapidly to as high as 87% and no volunteers were forthcoming. It was also detected at this time that organized groups were loitering around the registration places and obviously influencing the loyalty registration. These groups were composed for the most part of Kibei. Consequently, registration was suspended. Colonel W. F. Scobey, Executive Officer for the Assistant Secretary of War, together with Lieutenant J. D. Hughes, Office of The Provost Marshal General, arrived at the location. Colonel Scobey met with a group of evacuee leaders and warned them against any subversive effort that in any way would effect the registration and recruiting program. Twenty-eight persons, half of them Issei and half Kibei, were rounded up by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, assisted by 319th MPEG Co., commanded by Captain William F. Patterson, Jr. The Issei were sent to an internment camp at Lordsburg, New Mexico, and the Kibei were sent to a segregation camp at Moab, Utah. That night, following the raid, meetings were held with the evacuee council and block managers and other Japanese-American leaders, and addressed by Mr. Bennett and Captain Thompson, explaining what had happened, why it happened, and that unless conditions improved even more drastic steps would be taken.

On February 15 registration was resumed and the trend of loyalty improved, the disloyalty in fact dropping to 40%. Likewise, volunteering picked up. On February 17th it was decided to reinterview the negative registrants of the first three days of registration. This resulted in 47% of the original 900 registrants changing their original "No's" on questions 27 and 28 to "Yes's". It should be pointed out that registration up to this point was confined to the male citizens of military age.

Prior to the registration of female citizens First Officer Roberts House of the WAAC addressed six meetings and Third Officer Elizabeth Holman addressed two meetings of the female citizens with very excellent results, as was evidenced by the fact that 2090 out of a possible 2423 signified their willingness to join either the WAAC or the Army Nurse Corps if these services were open to them.

The next group registered was male citizens over military age, and the final group was male and female Issei. The final stages of registration consisted of visiting invalids and those in the hospital.

The number of volunteers secured up to March 10th was so disappointing that it was decided to hold Army Smokers to stimulate the recruiting program. Recruiting films were secured from the Signal Officer, San Francisco, California, guest speakers were brought in, and all evacuees who had volunteered, plus those who had answered questions 27 and 28 in the affirmative, were invited to attend. The net result was that some 32 additional volunteers were secured.

7. ATTITUDE. Approaching Japanese psychology, to the uninitiated, is a distinct problem. Therefore consideration should be given to the fact that the evacuees in this center, like all other Relocation Centers, have in their opinion been subjected to many hardships. Isolated in the desert as they have been since August, 1942, they have lost contact with national and world events, and owing to the isolation have dwelt principally on the fancied injustices that they have received. Consequently, many minor matters have grown in their estimation to paramount importance. This is a normal reaction, and not peculiar to Japanese-Americans alone. While it is true that many of them have suffered financial reverses by reason of the fact that they were forced to liquidate their businesses in California, it is likewise true that many of them are better off from an economic standpoint than they perhaps have ever been before in their lives. The latter faction is not a dominating one in holding the opinion of other evacuees. The educated Japanese-American is for the most part very ambitious and naturally industrious. He is also mercenary and extremely self-centered. His immediate reaction is, "How does this effect me personally?" There is little or no group spirit or civil pride among them. The family unit is the dominating factor, first and last. The passive indifference demonstrated during the first days of registration developed rapidly into hostile demonstrations. It is my opinion that this was actuated by the Kibei and the Issei groups, some of whom were removed from the Center on the 15th of February. A change in attitude is heralded by bonfires burning at night, about which small groups of men gather and spend the night in endless conversation.

The first hostile demonstrations consisted of verbal abuse in both English and Japanese, directed at members of the military mission while walking through various parts of the Center. This seemed to be a particularly well organized activity, as each window on both sides of the street gave voice to some obscene or profane expression. The speaker,

however, was never in evidence. Another favorite antic was performed chiefly by truck drivers who swerved their trucks at us at the moment of passing, whether we were on foot or in a car, counting on the dust to obscure their license plate. Never in the day time, but often at night, members of the mission were trailed by gangs of ten to twenty-five. Technical Sergeant Aburaman received many threats of bodily injury. The usual method resorted to is to beat an individual with clubs, break his arms and sometimes his legs via Judo, and toss him into the irrigation canal. The bone breaking precedes the beating.

Captain Thompson personally interviewed some 700 Japanese-American citizens of military age who have foresworn their allegiance to the United States and refused to serve in the armed forces. Many of these refused to be drawn out or give any explanation of their action other than that they wished repatriation and had no interest whatever in the United States. It was possible however to get an explanation from the others. One reason advanced by approximately 5% of those who talked was that they did not believe that public opinion in the United States would ever permit the assimilation of orientals, at least not in their lifetime, and in consequence felt their future lay in Japan. Another 15% were obviously either pacifists or slackers. This group consisted almost entirely of Kibei who had returned to the United States from Japan when Japan declared war on China, their object being to escape military service in the Japanese Army against the Chinese. They were quite frank in stating that they had returned to the United States because they were confident public sentiment in this country would keep us out of any European or Asiatic wars. This group is truly radical and apparently holds no loyalty for any country or government. Approximately another 10% were very confident that Japan would win the war and in consequence felt that having dual citizenship they would be very stupid to throw their lot in with the losing side.

It is difficult for Americans to comprehend the strength of family ties among Japanese. It is positively paramount to every other condition. The family comes first, the country second. The head of a family dominates it completely, regardless of the age of the children or marital status. Eldest sons are bound by a code that is irrevocable. The eldest son is responsible for the welfare and happiness of his parents as long as they shall live, and must regardless of circumstances, conform to their wishes and desires. Consequently if an Issei father or mother wishes to return to Japan, as many of them do, so that they may be sure their ashes will be buried with their ancestors, the eldest son, regardless of age of his own family, is honor bound to return with them, however much he may wish to remain a loyal American citizen. Convictions of this sort exist principally with those Japanese-Americans who have lived in rural areas, surrounded by Japanese-American neighbors, and who have had little or no contact with American-Caucasians. At least 20% of the number interviewed felt bound by this responsibility.



There was another group who owned property in Japan, or would inherit property eventually. It was interesting to watch their mental process of evaluating the dollar value of their inheritance against American citizenship. A thousand dollars or four thousand yes was usually sufficient to swing them to the Emperor. This group numbered approximately 10%.

There was still another 10% group who had convinced themselves that by supplying negative answers to questions 27 and 28 they would escape the draft, be able to remain in the Relocation Center for the duration of the war, and would at its conclusion occupy about the same position in American society as the Issei element have for years. They realized that they would lose their United States citizenship, but to them that meant only the right to vote and they felt that voting was more or less a waste of time anyway.

There was another 10% minority who were convinced that the registration was illegal and that it could not be made compulsory, although they all signed, and they were equally certain that no action would ever be taken to intern, draft or deport them. They represented for the most part the usual type of guard-house lawyer, and would argue endlessly on the subject if given the opportunity. No amount of sound reasoning however seemed to alter their opinion.

A group of younger Nisei, approximately 10%, were of the sore-head variety and extremely bitter at the treatment they had received. Their particular grievances were that the evacuation was unconstitutional, that as American citizens their constitutional rights had been violated, and that the organization of a Nisei combat unit was but a further step and placed them in the general category with negroes. Their principal contention was that they were completely disillusioned and that what "Couldn't happen here", had and was, happening to them. As a result, their attitude could be summed up in the statement of one of their number who said, "Captain, I feel like "To hell with everything!". I feel that 90% of this group could be salvaged if immediate action were taken.

Still another faction, representing approximately 10% of the group, were Nisei whose parents or relatives are now held in internment camps, and whom they believe to be guiltless. Many of the young men in this group attempted to effect a trade whereby they would change their negative answers to affirmative and volunteer for immediate duty with the Nisei Combat Unit if their parent or relative could be released from the internment camp and returned to the Relocation Center.

As before stated, approximately half of this group of 900 who had answered in the negative manner changed their answers to the affirmative following these interviews.

The Japanese policy of seldom approaching any problem directly makes it extremely difficult for the average American to finalize anything with them. Their approach is usually through a second or even a third person,

and results in innumerable conferences and a terrific waste of time.

The Japanese-American Civil League was represented at Gila River, and at the beginning of the registration program they were very active in support of the program. However, as soon as difficulties arose they quickly faded out of the picture and gave the program little or no support. This may have been due in part to the fact that one of their leaders was over military age, father of five children, and physically unfit for military service. Consequently he could not set an example by volunteering. The President of the local chapter, also married, did volunteer however on the last day of registration. The results experienced from this group were nevertheless disappointing.

The splendid record established by the female citizens whereby 87% of them volunteered their services for the WAAC or the Army Nurse corps, and showed an 88% loyalty factor, can be attributed in part to the fact that Japanese women have in the past, enjoyed few of the privileges and little of the liberty, that women in the United States take for granted. The Nisei girls are most appreciative of their present status in this country and apparently have no intention of losing it through repatriation to Japan.

One thing that stands out as paramount in all dealings with Japanese-Americans is that they cannot and will not accept or assimilate any change of policy quickly. The element of time is a most important one in dealing with them. If it is possible to present a policy and defer action on their part for a period of two, three, even four weeks the ultimate success of it is practically assured. On the other hand if it required immediate action on their part or an immediate decision they will oppose it with every means at their command. As a group they prefer government with a firm hand. Notwithstanding that, they love to debate any issue, regardless of how trivial it may be, but they respect a direct statement of fact, particularly when it is solidly backed up.

An interesting side-light on Relocation Center activities may be obtained by asking the opinion of one of the Pima Indians, in the midst of whose reservation the Center is located, what he thinks of what is being done. He fixes you with a very black and glittering eye, and after several grunts to show his complete dissatisfaction asks you how you would like to sit in the doorway of an adobe wagon and watch another tribe, as he called the Japanese-Americans, turn his desert into an agricultural paradise with equipment, housing facilities, hospitals, schools, recreation centers and monthly subsistencies, all donated by the Federal Government? It leaves the original American very disconsolate.

8. SUMMARY. My opinion is that 25% of the male citizens of military age at Gila River are thoroughly loyal in the best American sense. I am equally confident that another 25% are disloyal. The balancing 50% might

be considered loyal, with reservations, but I believe that many of them can be salvaged if the following steps are taken immediately:

- a. Immediate segregation of all those who have foresworn their allegiance to the United States by negative answers to questions 27 and 28. Several of the smaller centers should be set aside as internment camps for these people. If they are allowed to remain in the centers their contaminating influence will increase rather than decrease.
- b. Immediate Induction of the Selective Service Act whereby all men of military age who have stated their loyalty to the United States would be taken into the armed services on a parity basis comparable to the rest of the country.
- c. Opening up enlistment in the WAC and Army Nurse Corps for female citizens who meet the qualifications, after the height minimum has been reduced.
- d. A voluntary plan to secure defense workers who are qualified through ability and loyalty to work in defense plants.
- e. The release of farm workers whose loyalty or sympathy is with the United States, this group to include qualified Issei.
- f. Rescind the regulation that prohibits the sale of foodstuffs grown at the Centers to the Armed Forces.
- g. The erection of movie theaters at the Centers where they are lacking, so that current films featuring national propaganda may be shown.

The great inconsistency which perhaps will never be answered is that literally hundreds of young Nisei appeared before the military board, obviously under great emotional stress, and registered negative answers to questions 27 and 28, explaining that their action was due principally to parental influence. Many of them stated that their parents would commit suicide if they answered the loyalty questions in any manner but "No". Others refused to volunteer for the same reason, saying that their parents were fearful of reprisals both in the Relocation Center and upon relatives in Japan if their sons entered the Army in any way except via the draft. By some remote form of reasoning, volunteering meant a certain loss of face, as well as disrespect to ones ancestors. The draft however, was another matter and for some most obscure reason placed the one drafted on a higher plane. But when the alien Issei were registered 99.9% of the males and 100% of the females pledged their sympathy and support to the United States.

During the last ten days of registration "change-overs", changing "No's" to "Yes's" on Questions 27 and 28 resulted in an 18% increase in loyalty, raising the final figure from 60% to 78%.

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The quicker these people can be relocated among Caucasians the sooner they will be assimilated and become real American citizens.

Norman R. Thompson  
Team Captain,  
Gila River Relocation Center.

## SUMMARY OILA RIVER REGISTRATION

(AS of 12: A.M. 3/16/43)

TOTAL REGISTRATION	9734	
Total Number (Male and Female Citizens)	5011	
Total Loyalty (Male and Female Citizens)	4111	
Total Aliens (Male and Female)	4723	
Total Sympathy "Yes" (Male and Female Aliens)	4722	
Total Number Volunteers	100	
A. <u>MEN</u>		
1. Male Citizens Military Age	2488	
a. Number answering "Yes"	1950	78%
b. Number volunteers	95	5%
c. Applications for Commissions	12	
d. Applications for Merchant Marines	6	
e. Applications for Interpreters' School	2	
2. Male Citizens Over Military Age	100	
a. Number answering "Yes"	89	89%
3. Male Aliens	2906	
a. Number answering "Yes"	2905	99.9%
b. Number of volunteers	5	
B. <u>WOMEN</u>		
1. Female Citizens	2423	
a. Number answering "Yes"	2141	88%
b. Volunteering for WAAG and ANG	2090	
2. Female Aliens	1817	
a. Number answering "Yes"	1817	100%

February 27, 19'

Reasons for Disloyalty Registration

I have personally interviewed over 700 of the Japanese-American citizens who have foresworn their allegiance to the United States. The majority of them are Kibel.

Their reasons:

Approx.

- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
| 5%          | 1. Do not believe that public opinion in the United States will ever permit the assimilation of Orientals.  |
| 15%         | 2. Pacifist groups does not want to bear arms for either the United States, Japan, or any other country. This group left Japan to avoid war service against China.  |
| 10%         | 3. Believe Japan will win the war.  |
| 20%         | 4. Elder sons with parents in Japan, or whose parents wish to return there, are bound by family tradition to provide for their parents and be governed by their wishes regardless of their own age or marital responsibilities. Parents first and country second. |
| 10%         | 5. Fear of losing inheritance rights to property in Japan.  |
| 10%         | 6. Those who believe they will escape the United States Draft and be permitted to remain here after the war on the same basis as issei have always enjoyed.   |
| 10%         | 7. Those who suspect that this registration is all a bluff and that no action will be taken to intern, draft, or deport them.   |
| 10%         | 8. Nisei who are soreheads over evacuation; segregation in the Army (special combat group). Their attitude; to hell with everything.  |
| 10%         | 9. Nisei whose parents or relatives are now held in internment camps and whom they believe are guiltless. Their attitude; take my parents out of jail and I will volunteer right now and fight to the finish.   |
| <u>100%</u> |   |

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Norman R. Thompson  
Captain, C.M.P.  
Commanding

WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY  
GILA RIVER PROJECT  
RIVERS, ARIZONACONFIDENTIAL

February 17, 1943

Mr. Dillon S. Myer  
Director  
War Relocation Authority  
Barr Building  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Myer:

Following our telephone conversation of Friday, February 12, we began immediate investigation of subversive activities. First, we rechecked the list of 10 names originally submitted to you for approval to remove from Gila River. Next, we began a close check on meetings which were being held by aliens and Kibei. Sunday we discussed the problem with representatives of the War-Veteran's group who agreed to supply us with further information. Sunday evening the veterans met with us, but did not supply the information we required. Monday morning, February 15, we continued investigation through every evacuee and appointed personnel who we thought could contribute something to the identification of the subversive persons.

At noon Captain Norman R. Thompson reported that the registration was up to 72 per cent "No" on questions 27 and 28. We then held a meeting of the principal employees of our staff and Captain Thompson; it was decided that we had to act without delay. We telephoned Mr. Flynn, United States Attorney in Phoenix, and made a 2:00 P.M. appointment for Captain Thompson, Mr. Terry, Mr. Williamson, and the writer. We took to this meeting the names of 20 persons of whom 16 were aliens. Because you so requested, we eliminated the name of Teruo Wakita, who has a son in the Army, but who we still consider very dangerous to our program.

Mr. Flynn after listening to our statements regarding these persons agreed to request a Presidential warrant for the arrest of all the aliens, provided that the Federal Bureau of Investigation was willing to accept responsibility for making the arrests; he also agreed to supply a Deputy Marshal to accompany the FBI agents. We then telephoned to Mr. Colter, Assistant FBI agent in charge during the absence of Mr. Duffy the agent in charge.

We then visited Mr. Colter who discussed every name on the list with us, including 4 Kibei and agreed that we had sufficient evidence for him to proceed. Mr. Colter then asked Mr. Flynn to have the Presidential warrant issued by telegram. After this meeting we returned to Gila and had a further discussion with evacuees regarding certain other persons not on the original list. All of these latter persons were Kibei. Tuesday

morning, February 16 at 10:00 A.M., Mr. Colter telephoned me that the warrant was issued and that he was sending 12 agents to arrest the aliens. Due to my previous telephone call to you we asked a little more time to complete our list; Mr. Colter stated that he would have to make the arrests by 3:00 P.M.

We then called a meeting with Captain Thompson, Mr. Terry, Mr. Hoffman, and Mr. Williamson; we decided to include the names of the Kibei not on the original list. I then authorized Mr. Frederick and Mr. Johnston of our internal security force to escort the Kibei to Moab, Utah and arranged with our motor pool to supply a truck with seats as transportation; also secure the proper travel money for the group.

Captain Thompson and I went to the Military Police headquarters and discussed with Captain Patterson and his officials the proper guarding of the operations. During this conversation Mr. Colter telephoned that he was sending 12 agents, 10 of whom would make the arrest and 2 of whom would remain with the trucks. He asked that the Military Police supply one soldier for each two agents and that we supply a qualified driver to drive the agents' cars and two of our own. We then asked Mr. Colter to have his agents report to the Military Police headquarters outside the Community.

We then arranged to have military guards posted at the entrances to the Project; also Military guards at the fence gates at each community to stop traffic to and from the communities and disburse crowds gathering during the removal of these persons. We then established as headquarters the intersection of the roads leading to the two communities and the highway to Phoenix and had stationed there two trucks -- one to take the aliens to Phoenix and the other to take the Kibei to Moab, Utah. At this point outside of the communities there was stationed one platoon of Military Police armed with submachine guns; these to protect the FBI agents during the loading of the persons arrested.

We then prepared slips of paper listing the name, block number, and place of employment of every man we were to pick up; these were divided into five teams and given to our staff drivers who were to escort the agents. Our own internal security men also prepared the same procedure for the removal of the Kibei.

Sharply at 3:00 P.M. the FBI agents and soldiers moved around outside of the Project and into the assembly point without going through the communities. The FBI cars then moved into Butte Community and as they arrested each person he was removed immediately to the assembly point. Our internal security men followed the same program. During all this the traffic was stopped. When the Butte operation was completed the same program was followed at Canal. In two hours and forty-five minutes 27 persons had been assembled and the aliens immediately started for Phoenix.

We had provided lunches and blankets for the Kibei who were bound for Moab and at 7:00 P.M. they were en route. By 6:00 P.M. all roads were again open and the entire project restored to normal.



3 - Mr. Dillon S. Jr

We immediately called a meeting of the Block Managers and Councils at which Mr. Cozzens, Captain Thompson and the writer explained the reason for the removal of 27 persons and that if any further difficulty arose it would be necessary to repeat the operation.

The FBI agents were unable to pick up Tetsuro Kageyama, but reported at 9:00 A.M. February 17 that this man was in custody; that all were accounted for. Mr. Cozzens and the writer drove around both communities at 10:30 P.M. on February 16 and the internal police made a complete round at 12:00 Midnight. At no time was any meeting held or any disturbance.

We do not believe that we have secured all of the subversive persons and are continuing our investigations. Within the near future we anticipate that more should be removed.

The internal security officers are making up a complete report of evidence against the persons removed which will be forwarded to you by air mail and we are also supplying the FBI with the same information for use in determining whether Federal charges should be made against some of the Kibei leaders.

A list of those removed to both Moab, Utah and Lordsburg, New Mexico is attached.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ L. H. Bennett  
L. H. Bennett  
Project Director

P.S. At no time were there more than five soldiers within the Project limits.